

March 23, 2011

TESTIMONY OPPOSING RAISED SENATE BILL 1094 (SB 1094) "AN ACT BANNING LARGE CAPACITY AMMUNITION MAGAZINES"

Representatives, I write this testimony to respectfully urge you to **oppose SB1094 "AN ACT BANNING LARGE CAPACITY AMMUNITION MAGAZINES"**. This bill will **cost the state of Connecticut millions of dollars**, has been proven to have **no effect on crime** and will **create a wave of new felons from normal everyday citizens**.

The cost of compliance for this bill will at minimum burden police departments and may even require extra police officers to collect and enforce these new restrictions as well as the cost associated with destruction of the property of private citizens. However given the controversial nature of this potential law, it is more likely that many lawsuits will be brought against the state for compensation of the seized property. **This compensation could be conservatively estimated at \$743 million¹** given the Connecticut population, percentage of gun owners, magazines per firearm, etc.

Empirical data has shown that **these types of laws have no effect on crime**. While it is hard to find unbiased data on gun laws, there are three major studies not associated with pro or anti gun groups, these studies are from: the Center for Disease Control (CDC) which **focused on the high capacity magazines and the assault weapons ban** after it expired, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, and the Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy. These studies have provided an empirical review of gun laws and their effectiveness. The CDC study concluded that "the Task Force found insufficient evidence to determine the effectiveness of any of the firearms laws reviewed for preventing violence"², while the U.S. National Academy of Sciences failed to identify any gun control that had reduced violent crime, suicide, or gun accidents³. The Harvard Journal stated "the determinants of murder and suicide are basic social, economic, and cultural factors, not the prevalence of some form of deadly mechanism."⁴ Clearly **when the science overcomes the emotion, gun laws do not deter criminals, and in fact looser gun**

¹ CT Population (3.5Million), CT gun ownership is 17%, average of 10 guns and 5 magazines per gun, average magazine cost \$25. $(3,500,000 \times 0.17 \times 10 \times 5 \times 25) = \$743,000,000$

² (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5214a2.htm>)

³ CHARLES F. WELLFORD ET AL., NAT'L RESEARCH COUNCIL, FIREARMS AND VIOLENCE: A CRITICAL REVIEW 6-10 (2004)

⁴ Harvard JLPP, Volume 30, Number 2
http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/ilpp/Vol30_No2_KatesMauseronline.pdf

laws may actually decrease crime as stated in economist Dr. John R. Lott's book "More Guns, Less Crime". Simple common sense will also reveal that a criminal would not hesitate to drive two hours and purchase these magazines legally from neighboring states and bring them back to Connecticut undetected and be undeterred by this law.

Finally this law will have the **unintended consequence of making felons out of ordinary citizens**. When the Connecticut Assault Weapon ban was passed it outlined cosmetic features that a rifle, pistol or shotgun could not have. Many people have been arrested or at the very least been an unknown felon as a result, but one particular instance comes to mind. There was a 21 year old man who was trying to sell his rifle to a gun store. The rifle was the same base model as the Boy Scouts of America .22 rifles (legal in CT). This man had changed the stock to an adjustable type that fit his shoulder better, but what he did not realize was that he had unwittingly created an assault weapon. Had there been a police officer present before he could remove the stock he would have been a convicted felon and his life ruined. With SB1094 anyone possessing a 10+ round magazine would equally be a felon. Imagine all of the retired police officers, new Connecticut immigrants, and all other men and women with pistols and rifles in their homes who were not aware of this law whose lives will be ruined by this bill. This is especially true since **most pistols come with a greater than 10+ round magazine as standard equipment and most rifles come with a 30 round magazine**. This means almost every gun owner in Connecticut runs the risk of becoming a felon, which based on the certain statistics, could be around 17% of the Connecticut population or 600,000 people according to recent surveys. **Would this law protect ordinary people from crime or make ordinary people into felons?**

All of this information leads to only one conclusion: **OPPOSE SB1094**. This law could cost the state \$743 million, would have no effect on crime and would create a wave of new felons who currently are upstanding, productive citizens. I encourage you to look at the footnoted sources to examine the data for yourself and once again respectfully request that you oppose this dangerous, ineffectual bill.

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